

Miscellaneous.

THE DAYS OF OLD.

BY REV. JESSE S. GILBERT, A. M.

On my study table lies a rare and curious book. It is a bound volume of Conference Minutes, "From 1773 to 1813 inclusive." It bears this imprint: "Published by Daniel Hitt and Thos. Ware for the Methodist Connection in the United States. John C. Toten, printer, 1813."

This book contains the Minutes of the first Conference held in America. The first Minutes—those of 1773—only occupy two pages. The heading is as follows: "Minutes of Some Conversations between the Preachers in connection with the Reverend Mr. John Wesley; Philadelphia: June, 1773."

In these first Minutes we find the following item of interest:—

"The following rules were agreed to by all the preachers present: Every preacher who acts in connection with Mr. Wesley or the brethren in labor in America is strictly bound to administer the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper. All the people among whom we labor are to be earnestly exhorted to attend the church, and to receive the ordinances there; but in a particular manner to press the people in Maryland and Virginia to the observance of this minute."

It is evident they desired to stick to the church."

The same Minutes contain a love-feast rule worthy of note:—

"No person or persons to be admitted into our love-feasts other than twice or thrice unless they become members; and none to be admitted to the society meetings more than twice."

The Minutes for this year report 1,160 members and ten preachers. The Minutes for 1774 are the same in size as those of 1773, but report 2,073 members and seventeen preachers. Methodism from its very beginning has been a vigorous plant.

Francis Asbury was stationed in New York, and Thomas Rankin in Philadelphia, and they were to change "in three months." And all the preachers were "to change at the end of six months." This was itinerancy with a vengeance. We will make one more extract from the Minutes of 1774:—

"This Conference agreed to the following particulars: Every preacher who is received into full connection, is to have the use and property of his horse, which any of the circuits may furnish him with. Every preacher is to be allowed 8 pounds Pennsylvania currency per quarter, and his traveling charges beside."

In the Minutes for 1775 occurs the following highly interesting entry: "A general fast ordered for the prosperity of the work, and for the peace of America, on Tuesday, the 18th of July."

In the Minutes for 1777, there is a very evident reference to the revolutionary troubles:—

"Quest. 7.—As the present distress is such, are the preachers resolved to take no step to detach themselves from the work of God for the ensuing year?

"Ans.—We propose, by the grace of God, not to take any step that may separate us from the brethren or from the blessed work in which we are engaged."

Question 8 for the same year is a curious one:—

"Has not the preaching of funeral sermons been carried so far as to prostitute that venerable custom, and in some sort to render it contemptible?

"Ans.—Yes. Therefore let all the preachers inform every society that we will not preach any but for those who, we have reason to think, died in the fear and favor of God."

The Conference for 1779 was held in Kent Co., Delaware, April 28, and records a new departure, for the 6th Question is: "Who of the preachers are willing to take the station this Conference shall place them in, and continue till next Conference?" Sixteen preachers respond to this call, and the names of Francis Asbury heads the list. They were still determined to stick "to the church," for Question 10 is this:—

"Shall we guard against a separation from the church directly or indirectly?"

"Ans.—By all means."

Question 11 refers to the children:—

"What shall be done with the children?"

"Ans.—Meet them once a fortnight and examine the parents with regard to their conduct toward them."

For the convenience of those who could not meet in the Delaware Conference, a Conference was held at Fluvanna on the 18th of May—the first instance of more than one Conference being held in the same year. The Minutes of this Conference do not contain much of note, save the following singular question and answer:—

"Quest. 8.—In what light shall we view those preachers who receive money by subscription?

"Ans.—As excluded from the Methodist connection."

Only one Conference was held in 1780, and that was held in Baltimore, April 24. Listen, ye modern D. D.'s to Question 11:—

"Ought not all our preachers to make conscience of rising at four, and if not, yet at five? (Is it not a shame for a preacher to be in bed till six in the morning?)

"Ans.—Undoubtedly they ought."

Still they cling to "the church," as we see by the next questions:—

"Quest. 12.—Shall we continue in close connection with the church, and press our people to a closer communion with her?"

"Ans.—Yes."

Question 14 relates to the wives of the few preachers who were married:—

"What provision shall we make for the wives of married preachers?"

"Ans.—They shall receive an equivalent with their husbands in quarterage, if they stand in need."

As early as 1780 Methodism took a firm stand on the subject of slavery:—

"Quest. 16.—Ought not this Conference to require those traveling preachers who hold slaves, to give promises to set them free?"

"Ans.—Yes."

"Quest. 17.—Does this Conference acknowledge that slavery is contrary to the laws of God, man and nature, and hurtful to society, contrary to the dictates of conscience and pure religion, and doing that which we would not others should do to us and ours? Do we pass our disapprobation on all our friends who keep slaves and advise their freedom?"

"Ans.—Yes."

In the same year action was taken on the temperance question:—

"Quest. 23.—Do we disapprove of the practice of distilling grain into liquor? Shall we disown our friends who will not renounce the practice?"

"Ans.—Yes."

In the Minutes for 1781 we get an idea of the small size of the libraries of at least some of the early preachers:—

"Quest. 8.—Ought not the preachers often to read the rules of the societies, the 'Character of a Methodist,' and the 'Plain Account of Christian Perfection,' if they have got them?"

"Ans.—Yes."

In the Minutes for 1783 we find the questions of slavery and temperance again coming up:—

"Quest. 10.—What shall be done with our local preachers who hold slaves contrary to the laws which anger their freedom in any of the United States?"

"Ans.—We will try them another year. In the meantime let every assistant deal faithfully and plainly with everyone, and report to the next Conference. It may then be necessary to suspend them."

In the same year an action was taken upon the temperance question:—

"Quest. 11.—Should our friends be permitted to make spirituous liquors, sell, and drink them in drams?"

"Ans.—By no means. We think it wrong in its nature and consequences, and desire all our preachers to teach the people by precept and example to put away that evil."

In the next year, 1774, up came the bugbear of slavery again:—

"Quest. 12.—What shall be done with our friends that will buy and sell slaves?"

"Ans.—If they buy with no other design than to hold them as slaves, and have been previously warned, they shall be expelled and permitted to sell on no consideration."

"Quest. 13.—What shall we do with our local preachers who will not emancipate their slaves in the States where the laws admit it?"

"Ans.—Try those in Virginia another year, and suspend the preachers in Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania and New Jersey."

The next question concerns singing:—

"Quest. 14.—How shall we reform our singing?"

"Ans.—Let all our preachers who have any knowledge in the notes, improve it by learning to sing true to themselves, and keeping close to Mr. Wesley's tunes and hymns."

This Conference passed a strong resolution concerning local preachers who hold slaves:—

"Quest. 22.—What shall be done with our traveling preachers that now are or hereafter shall be possessed of slaves, and refuse to manumit them where the law permits?"

"Ans.—Employ them no more."

The next year, 1785, there were three Conferences held:—"the first at Greenhill, North Carolina, Friday, the 29th, and Saturday, the 30th, of April; the second in Virginia at Conference chapel, May 8th; the third in Baltimore, Maryland, the 13th day of June." Hence we now have for a heading: "Minutes taken at the several Annual Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, for the year 1785."

At the beginning of the Minutes for this year (1785) is the memorable letter of Mr. Wesley, dated Bristol, Sept. 10, 1784, concluding with these words:—

"As our American brethren are now totally disengaged both from the State and from the English hierarchy, we dare not entangle them again either with the one or the other. They are now at full liberty simply to follow the Scriptures and the primitive church. And we judge it best that they should stand fast in that liberty wherewith God has so strangely made them free."

"JOHN WESLEY."

"Therefore"—we find added in the Minutes—"at this Conference we formed ourselves an independent church; and following the counsel of Mr. John Wesley, who recommended the episcopal mode of church government, we thought it best to become an episcopal church, making the episcopal office elective, and the elected superintendent or bishop amenable to the body of ministers and preachers." Then the Methodist Episcopal Church was fully launched.

To the first question, "Who are the superintendents of our church?" comes the answer, "Thomas Coke, Francis Asbury." In the list of elders we find the names of Richard Whitecoat and Freeborn Garrettson. Among the names of those admitted in full connection, stands the name of Jesse Lee. Thomas Lee remained on trial, and Ezekiel Cooper was admitted on trial. Lee Roy Cole was "laid aside." In answer to the question, "Who have died this year?" we have two obituary notices that, for point and brevity, are perfect models, and would delight the heart of any modern editor:—

"Ans.—Undoubtedly they ought."

Still they cling to "the church," as we see by the next questions:—

"Quest. 12.—Shall we continue in close connection with the church, and press our people to a closer communion with her?"

"Ans.—As excluded from the Methodist connection."

Ought not all our preachers to make conscience of rising at four, and if not, yet at five? (Is it not a shame for a preacher to be in bed till six in the morning?)

"Ans.—Yes."

Question 14 relates to the wives of the few preachers who were married:—

"What provision shall we make for the wives of married preachers?"

"Ans.—They shall receive an equivalent with their husbands in quarterage, if they stand in need."

"Ans.—Yes."

Question 16.—Ought not this Conference to require those traveling preachers who hold slaves, to give promises to set them free?

"Ans.—Yes."

"Quest. 17.—Does this Conference acknowledge that slavery is contrary to the laws of God, man and nature, and hurtful to society, contrary to the dictates of conscience and pure religion, and doing that which we would not others should do to us and ours? Do we pass our disapprobation on all our friends who keep slaves and advise their freedom?"

"Ans.—Yes."

In the same year action was taken on the temperance question:—

"Quest. 23.—Do we disapprove of the practice of distilling grain into liquor? Shall we disown our friends who will not renounce the practice?"

"Ans.—Yes."

In the Minutes for 1786 are some interesting financial questions:—

"Quest. 13.—What is the yearly collection?"

"Ans.—1821, 6s. 6d."

"Quest. 14.—How was this applied?"

"Ans.—Towards supplying the deficiencies of the preachers."

"Quest. 15.—What was contributed towards the preachers' fund for the superannuated preachers, and the widows and orphans of preachers?"

"Ans.—38s. 6s. 4d."

"Quest. 16.—What demands are upon it?"

"Ans.—14 l for the funeral expenses of Jeremiah Lambert."

"Quest. 17.—What was collected and expended on missionaries this year?"

"Ans.—54 l, 17s."

In the Minutes for 1787 is the following curious question:—

"Quest. 18.—Are not many of our preachers and people dissatisfied with the salaries allowed our married preachers who have children?"

"Ans.—They are; therefore, for the future, no married preacher shall demand more than 48 P. C."

But we might as well stop here as anywhere. There is a wondrous fascination about these old Minutes. It seems hard to realize that these long dry lists of names represent names of fire and feeling, who lived and loved, and went home to glory. We inherit their labors. May we prove worthy of such a "goodly heritage," do our work well, and meet the "fathers" in the great home above!

THE BANNER MISSIONARY CONFERENCE.

BY BISHOP WARREN.

Where is it? Let us take up the banner, and, passing along the line, see who claims it. We first set it down in the New England, the richest State, *per capita*, in the Union. It compels Pennsylvania to freight its coal and iron to it, and receive them back as manufactured articles, paying transportation over a thousand miles, and four or five profits.

"Quest. 10.—What shall be done with our friends that will buy and sell slaves?"

"Ans.—By no means. We think it wrong in its nature and consequences, and desire all our preachers to teach the people by precept and example to put away that evil."

In the next year, 1788, up came the bugbear of slavery again:—

"Quest. 12.—What shall be done with our traveling preachers that now are or hereafter shall be possessed of slaves, and refuse to manumit them where the law permits?"

"Ans.—Employ them no more."

The next question concerns singing:—

"Quest. 14.—How shall we reform our singing?"

"Ans.—Let all our preachers who have any knowledge in the notes, improve it by learning to sing true to themselves, and keeping close to Mr. Wesley's tunes and hymns."

"Ans.—Employ them no more."

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The Sunday School.

FIRST QUARTER, LESSON II.

Sunday, January 8. Mark 1: 15-24.

By REV. W. O. HOLWAY, U. S. N.

JESUS IN GALILEE.

I. Preliminary.

1. DATE: A. D. 28 (See Chronology below).

2. PLACE: Capernaum, on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee, and its vicinity.

3. CONNECTION: 1, the miracle at Cana; 2, the first passover at Jerusalem; 3, the cleansing of the Temple; 4, the conversion with Nicodemus; 5, the Judean ministry; 6, retirement from Judea on account of the hostility of the Pharisees; 7, conversation with the woman of Samaria; 8, the healing of the nobleman's son; 9, imprisonment of John the Baptist; 10, the second passover at Jerusalem; 11, cure of the impotent man at Bethesda; 12, return to Galilee, and rejection at Nazareth; 13, selection of Capernaum by our Lord as His home.

4. PARALLEL NARRATIVES: The ministry in Galilee, Matt. 4: 17; Luke 4: 14, 15; John 4: 46-54. The call of the disciples, Matt. 4: 18-22; Luke 5: 1-11. The healing of the demoniac, Matt. 8: 22-25; Luke 4: 31-37.

5. CHRONOLOGY: Both the order of events, the dates and the length of our Lord's ministry, are in dispute. The most satisfactory harmonist, as it appears to us, is Andrews ("Life of our Lord") whose dates are well known. He accepts a three years' ministry, but puts the whole of the Galilean ministry after the second passover (John 5: 1). Says Schiff: "The order is much simplified by this theory; it avoids the great difficulty which has been felt in explaining the Synoptic accounts over three years, and also the difficulty common to both the other theories (a two years' ministry and Robinson's harmony), namely, inserting so important a visit to Jerusalem as that recorded in John 5, at a point in the Synoptic narratives where there is nothing to indicate such a visit."

II. Introductory.

The voice of the herald preacher had been stilled. The wilderness and the fords of the Jordan were no longer thronged with eager penitents from village and city. John was shut up in Machaerus. But the word of the Lord was not bound. The kingdom of God was preached by the King himself, who in the guise of a humble peasant walked through the populous towns of Galilee, calling upon the people to repent and believe. And he did not long walk alone. At his call Peter and Andrew forthwith left their nets and fish—there their earthly all—on the shores of the Galilean lake, to join him as personal attendants and disciples; and James and John showed the same unhesitating promptness when he summoned them, also, to become "fishers of men," from the boat where, with their father and servants, they were mending their nets, which had been broken by an unexpected and miraculous catch of fish resulting from Jesus' command. Our Lord had already taken up His residence at Capernaum, and to this busy town, not far away, He now went, with the four. Peter had a home here, and Jesus was probably his guest. On the next day, the Sabbath, they went to the synagogue, where Jesus, using the privilege accorded to visitors at the close of the prayers and lessons, proclaimed the Gospel of the kingdom of God—a theme entirely new, in strange contrast with the usual rabbinical teaching, and unfolded with a freshness, power of statement, and tone of personal authority which astonished, while it impressed, His hearers. Not was it His teaching alone which astonished them. An incident occurred that day of a most startling kind and which the worshippers would not soon forget. A wretched demoniac, in a lucid moment, had followed the crowd into the synagogue. The unhappy man was seized with a frenzy. The demon within him, aroused and fearing, discerning the true personality of Jesus and raging at the discovery, while at the same time he was irresistibly compelled to confess it, shrank from the organs of the unhappy man a cry of dismay and depreciation. So completely did he control the man, that it was the victim himself, who with wild gestures and glaring eyes demanded: "What have we to do with Thee, Thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us? I know Thee who Thou art, the Holy One of God." But it was the demon and not the man whom Jesus sternly rebuked, with the command to be silent and to "come out of him;" and it was the invisible malignant demon in his final act of rage which convulsed the poor wretch, and then with a yell of horror and anguish came out of him. No wonder that the synagogue became a scene of confusion; that the excited people broke forth into questions and comments; that the power of one who compelled fallen spirits to obey His word should startle and amaze them; and that the report of this strange occurrence should be carried throughout all Galilee.

III. Expository and Practical.

Verse 14. After that John was put in prison (R. V., "after that John was delivered up").

—See chap. 6: 17. Herod Antipas, tetrarch of Perea and Galilee, had listened to the preaching of John and had yielded in a measure to its influence. But he had been guilty of a crime—or of taking to himself Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip (still living) and the faithful peacock had reproved him to his face: "It is not lawful for thee to have her." The enraged Herodias sought to kill him, but could not. John was, however, arrested by Herod, and confined in the fortress of Machaerus, on the east side of the Dead Sea. Gekke thinks that political reasons may have had weight in this confinement of John—but his vast popularity and terrible denunciations of the Pharisees and rulers leading the latter to appeal to Pilate, and Pilate to appeal to Herod, to "crush the unlicensed teacher."

Jesus came into Galilee.—Our Lord's Judean ministry had excited the anger and threats of the Pharisees (John 7: 1). Galilee was an open and opportune field, a large mass of its population having been deeply impressed by the Baptist's preaching. His voice was now silenced. The herald had done his work. It was fitting that, the way having been prepared, Jesus should Himself appear and preach. *Preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God* (R. V., "the gospel of God").—The substance of His preaching and the conditions imposed are told in the next verse.

Note that "God buries His workers"—such human malice to bury them in prison sometimes—but carries on His work."

The "voice in the wilderness" was still, but a mighty Voice was heard in the villages. Says Henry: "If some be laid aside, others shall be raised up, perhaps mightier than they, to carry on the same work."

Verse 15. *The time is fulfilled*—the time of preparation, training, etc., for the world and for the Jewish race. The hour of the world's redemption had struck. Daniel's "seventy weeks" were fulfilled. The prophecies and providences of four thousand years converged in this long-expected "fullness of time." *The kingdom of God is at hand* (Matthew and Luke, "kingdom of heaven")—the reign of Christ, the kingdom of righteousness, joy and peace in the Holy Ghost. God had spoken by the prophets; He now spoke by His Son. The old dispensation, with its local temple, rites and types, was to pass away. Its meaning was to be fulfilled in the spiritual temple, the church of the Living God. *Repent ye*.—Be sorry for, and forsake, sin. This was the first condition, and had already been insisted upon by the Baptist. *Believe the gospel* (R. V., "believe in the gospel")—a record for the world and for the Jewish race. The hour of the world's redemption had struck. 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HERALD.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 29, 1881.

This number of our paper closes its issues for the present year. Before another is in the hands of our readers, the record of the year 1881 will be sealed, and a new era commenced. It seems but a hand-breadth since we entered upon the now closing twelve months; but how many events have been crowded into it! How many who commenced the year full of hope have passed behind the veil, and their lives here are rapidly becoming fading memories? Where are the persons themselves to-day, and how are they engaged? Who can tell? How thoughtfully the year with many of us was commenced! How have its vows and serious resolutions been kept? What, on the whole, is the moral record of the page bearing our names that is now about to be closed in the book of life? No reflecting mind can watch the departing hours of a year without deep emotion. Its opportunities cannot be recalled, its mistakes cannot be remedied, its influences for evil upon society cannot be obviated. For better or worse its history is recorded as it has been related to our lives. There is a proper attitude for every one of us. It is the position of the publican, and his prayer may well become us, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" And let sincere thanks be offered to God that it is written, "If any man sin we have an Advocate with the Father."

If the old year closes with thoughtful reflections, certainly the new year should not be permitted to open upon us without due consideration. Who can prophesy what the year may bring forth? How many possibilities of disappointment and sorrow lie along our pathway! The opening hours have a marked influence over all that are to follow. A thoughtless commencement ordinarily insures a lost year. It is too broad a portion of human life to throw away, if we are spared to see the close of it. The path is too darkly shadowed for a finite mind to attempt to hurry through its mysteries unattended. We need a divine Eye and a heavenly Hand. To walk with God a year is to insure the safest, happiest, and most useful period of our lives. He is not unwilling to be invited into our business, our homes, and our hearts. If God be for us, who can be against us? Let not this rare hour for personal consecration be lost. When our Lord entered upon a fresh era in His work, He retired to the desert place or mountain to pray. Let us enter upon the new year find some retired spot, where the world will be effectually shut out, and wrestle in humble prayer until the voice comes from heaven, "My Presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest."

The opening of the new year offers a very favorable hour for special religious efforts for the revival of Christian faith and earnestness in the churches. The first week has now for a number of years been devoted, under the appointments of the Christian Alliance, to prayers for great public interests of a more or less religious character. Some have questioned the wisdom of diverting these days from their first intended object—united prayer for the outpouring of the Spirit upon the churches at home and in foreign lands. It is not necessary to follow rigidly any one programme, although there is a moral power in this ecumenical prayer the world over. The conditions of local churches should be considered. It may be the wisest course simply to devote the week to continued prayer for a reviving blessing from on high. A series of services, afternoon and evening, like the protracted meeting of forty years ago, would be a benediction to hundreds of our churches. Let the next year open with humiliation, consecration and the sanctification of the Spirit.

The next year has its stern political outlooks. In our own land there is an unusual promise of civil quiet, of good understanding between the different sections, and of some softening of party bitterness. The present awkward relation of some of our ministers with the South American governments, the lively fusilage of rhetoric in regard to the canal across the Isthmus, will soon be over and forgotten, with the shedding of nothing more serious than ink. But

upon the other side of the Atlantic the political clouds are denser. The troubles in Ireland are far from being composed. Much more severe measures must be taken to stamp out incipient rebellion, if peace and obedience to law are to be attained in this way. France has her serious legislative problems to solve, and much more serious religious questions at stake. Germany is restive in the personal rule of her great, but arbitrary, chief minister. Russia slumbers over a volcano. Turkey is always liable to disturb the peace of Europe. Italy has an irreconcilable ecclesiastical government in the heart of her capital plotting against her stability, and Spain has a powerful republican leaving with her borders spreading its constant anti-monarchical force through the different ranks of society. It requires but a careless hand to touch any of these sensitive points, and the most serious results may follow. History has been made very rapidly in the last quarter of a century, and the coming year may form a very important chapter in the records of the close of the nineteenth century.

THE BITTERNESS OF OUR POLITICS.

There is an ominous pause at this hour in the political press. The President is not denounced for his acts, and what is more astonishing still, his appointments, with the exception of the weak disapproval of a few conspicuous sheets, are generally approved. This unwonted calm cannot remain long. Our politics, like the Atlantic Ocean, cannot be depended upon. An amazing change may occur in a very short period. The remarkable reticence of President Arthur is greatly in his favor. He seems to repose his plans in the hands of few, if any, confidants. He does not disclose his intentions long enough beforehand to give opportunity for the thunder to be awakened all around the heavens to hinder the consummation of his purposes. His nominations have commanded the respect of his fellow-citizens, and the wail of the disappointed has not created, as yet, sufficient clamor to cause a reaction in the public estimation of his ability and patriotic worth.

The death of President Garfield has saved his name and fame to his country. Had he lived, and had the attempt upon his life never been made, Europe, instead of embalming his memory in her current literature, would only have read the sharp and bitter criticisms of his political enemies upon his appointments and executive acts, and never have received an adequate conception of his ability and virtue. Already the terrible note of distrust and denunciation had been sounded before the fatal blow struck him. He was becoming the tool of unworthy friends, it was loudly whispered; he was yielding to the clamor of the "machine"—what or whoever that is; he was trampling upon civil service. He had only to continue his presidency a few months longer to have awakened the harshes and most ungenerous criticism.

Of course this ought not to be. But what shall we do about it? It requires some nerve to stand up against the prevailing habit. It is the easiest possible way to earn little attention and praise from weak minds to join in the unfounded but popular denunciation of conspicuous men. The more violent the language, the more virtuous the political prophet in the estimation of the thoughtless. The reputation of our rulers is worth much to all of us. We owe it to every man (especially to those who are placed where they cannot defend themselves) to watch carefully over his reputation and to defend his honest fame. Men must be permitted to fall into venial errors without being accused of committing the unpardonable sin. The religious press, at least, should lift up a plea for the golden rule, and, if nothing more, illustrate it in the conduct of its columns.

FAITH-CURE.

"The prayer of faith shall save the sick," says St. James, and the history of the church from the apostolic day to this proves the saying true. In almost every Christian community there are instances, known to them who have spiritual insight, although ignored or explained away by others, where Christ has revealed to them who have eyes to see that He has healing power upon the body as well as upon the soul. Yet it is to be fully and clearly admitted that it is impossible to prove scientifically that a given case of sickness has been healed by prayer, as to demonstrate that it has been cured by any particular medicine or course of medical treatment; for it is always possible for the objector to say that the patient would have recovered in the one case without the prayer, and in the other without medicine or medical treatment. We can have as much proof that prayer cures as that any given medicine cures, but we can have no more. And again, just as the cures effected by a whole school of medical practitioners are commonly accounted for by a rival school on the theory that the patient is really cured by his own imagination, or "will power," so, absurd as it sometimes is, the same theory will be used to explain cures by the prayer of faith.

It is largely the premature deaths of two of our Presidents that have embalmed their memories in the affection of the American people. If Mr. Lincoln had lived, in spite of his glorious war record, and his abiding patriotism and unfaltering faith, his wise statesmanship and unselfish administration of the government, he would have received the ummingled abuse of one wing of his own party, and the denunciations of the whole of the other. For his best fame and tender remembrance by his fellow-citizens he has to thank the assassin's bullet. The moment he died this unmeasured abuse ceased, and universal eulogy took its place. But death made him no more true, or noble, or worthy of the respect of his countrymen, and their unrestrained tears and unlimited praise were an

open rebuke to the violence with which not his acts only, but his motives, had been criticised.

It was a sad experiment for Gen. Grant, at the height of his popularity and in the hour when he held the universal regard of the nation, to accept the nomination to the presidency. His popularity with the soldiers and with the people could not save him. No man has been more bitterly abused. There has been no restraint upon the false reports that have been circulated in reference to his private life. His real ability, his executive force—although illustrated in his administration and vouchcd for by some of the finest and calmest minds of the day, who are drawn near to him in close political relations—availed nothing.

The political slogan was sounded, and every political horn in the land, belonging to the same corps, rang in harmony with its blasts. The obligation the country owed to him seemed entirely forgotten, and every expression of sensibility manifested towards him by those who had not utterly lost a sense of justice, was attributed, meanly, to a selfish readiness on his part to accept of undeserved favors.

As a general in the army, and as governor of Ohio, as a citizen of great probity and of more than respectable talents, Mr. Hayes entered upon the high office of the chief of his nation. But that station once reached, his popularity ended. His very virtues were construed into meanness and his self-restraint into insensibility.

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death, but sickness also, is good for us as a race. In this sinful condition, not only do we need the chastisement of sickness ourselves, than for their souls, more desirous to be relieved from the present pain than to receive for ourselves or our friends what God sees to be our highest good, we are not in a state to pray acceptably. How often after some great sorrow is past do we see that we were smitten in love! Then it became clear that God refused to grant our desire in wisdom and in goodness. Such experiences are common with those who are seeking the highest good for themselves and for those they love. How true we then find the apostolic words, "We know not what we should pray for as we ought!" But it is added, "The Spirit Himself maketh intercession for us" (through our prayers, when led by the Spirit) "with groanings that cannot be uttered."

Here now we have the true attitude of the soul in acceptable prayer. In the first place there is a humble confession of ignorance as to our real and deepest wants, and then a patient waiting to learn what they are from the Spirit that broods over the soul in genuine prayer. "We know not how to pray as we ought" (Revised Version), confesses that we are always, even at our best, ignorant of both the proper matter and manner of prayer. At our best we are obviously too weak, too short-sighted, too selfish, to undertake the government of a world—certainly this is self-evident; and, since the interests of all men are interwoven with ours, to absolve direct God's action in any matter is virtually to govern the world. But this ignorance, so far from crushing us into helpless despair, is the very spring of hope and strength. "We know not," but eternal Wisdom fully knows, and eternal Goodness, revealed at the wondrous cross, yearns to give us just what we need. Our conscious ignorance and selfishness drive us to eternal Wisdom and Love. Waiting before the cross, we feel that His wisdom is to be fully trusted as to what is best for us in the pressing emergency that is upon us, and so we wait in patient faith to see what desires He may suggest to us by the Spirit. Often the only prayer that the Spirit whispers is the prayer of our suffering Master, "They will be done." We may wait for hours, for days, for years, before the Throne, and murmur only this single prayer, not presuming to specify farther, humbly expecting more special suggestions of the Spirit. But, even when thus led through darkness, we may have the assurance that we are led wisely and lovingly, and in these few simple words may find peace, victory, and even triumph. Jesus prayed, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from Me;" and yet it was not possible, for He drank the cup to its utmost bitterness; and can we expect always to know what is best for us?

The use of natural means in connection with prayer is an important branch of this subject; but we have no space to consider it here.

Editorial Items.

BRIEF MENTION.

Wesleyan Club at the Revere House Wednesday evening, Dec. 28. Ladies to be present. Tickets for gentlemen, \$2; for their ladies, \$1.50. There will be a full attendance on a rare occasion.

A. Williams & Co. have for the holidays "The Christmas Tree"—a thin quarto, with eight full-page colored plates, and a number of extra illustrations with attractive stories with illustrations. The book is quite an attractive one.

On Monday morning the streets of Boston were like the Sabbath—the stores closed and business largely stopped. Never was Christmas so honored in the Puritan city as on Sunday and Monday last.

The East Tennessee Wesleyan University at Athens, under President Spence, is enjoying much prosperity. Fifty new students were enrolled the present year. It is the best patronized and most efficient institution in that portion of the State.

Rev. Nathan Hubbell, of Brooklyn, N. Y., has a semi-occasional organ, called "The Inquirer," which he edits and publishes in the city sights of Rome and Naples to see street railway cars like those in our large towns. They have been introduced within a few years, but they will soon be found everywhere.

The publishers of the *Atlantic Monthly*, Messrs. Houghton, Mifflin & Co., have for the last four or five years issued a fine, life-size lithographic portrait of the leading New England poets. Longfellow, Lowell, Whittier, Holmes and Bryant have already been prepared. This year they publish a remarkable picture of the poet-philosopher, Emerson. It is not the Emerson of to-day, but the straight-faced, the strong and tender face, the inverted eyes, the powerful nose, the unfriendly head of twenty-five years ago. The likeness is a fine one. The picture is sold to subscribers of the *Monthly* for \$1, and to others for \$5. It is in some respects the best portrait of the set.

The Congregational Publishing House, Boston, issues what it calls a "Pocket Series" of Notes on the International Sunday-school Lessons for 1882, by Rev. R. R. Meredith. The work is published in four quarterly parts. The first is now ready for delivery. It is similar to his comments on the lessons for last year, which were quite well received. The lessons are thoroughly analyzed. The volume is very convenient as to size. Mr. Meredith has also prepared a question book for senior scholars which meets a want, and will be welcomed by Bible classes.

We had a pleasant call from Rev. C. H. Buck, of the First M. E. Church, New Haven. He has been lecturing on Egypt, at North Eastern. His tour abroad some two years ago afforded him a good variety of interesting topics for lectures, which are well appreciated by his audiences.

We are indebted, we suppose, to our old friend, Rev. E. S. Chase, formerly of the New England Conference, now of the Southern California, and stationed at Los Angeles, for a copy of the Minutes of the latter body. It was held last September under the presidency of Bishop Harris. It numbers thirty-seven members and three probationers.

—Rev. R. E. Bisbee, now the collecting agent in New England for the Freedmen's Aid Society, issues an interesting little sheet, full of information and inspiration, entitled the *Freedmen's Aid Herald*. It is for gratifying circulation, and is an excellent tract to distribute.

—Pilgrim Day moves West and South with its children. It was celebrated with great fervor by the "Sons" in Brooklyn, in New York city, and in Philadelphia, last week, as well as in Boston. It was evident that some of the speakers had "kissed the stone." President Arthur was present in New York city and made a very graceful short speech.

—The New York Wesleyan Club held its annual gathering last week under the presidency of Judge Reynolds. It was an enthusiastic meeting. Mr. Seney, whose gifts to the college already exceed \$500,000, was present and was very warmly received, as well he may be. The college has now a clear endowment fund of nearly \$800,000, and a scholarship fund of over \$100,000.

—We should blush to publish the letter received from all portions of the country, and from a great variety of social classes, in reference to the estimation in which ZION'S HERALD is held. We feel the responsibility growing out of this appreciation. Thanks to the hundred dros who have kindly taken pains to write their favorable criticisms! We cannot answer them, and are too modest to publish them. If industry and faithfulness are an adequate return, these shall not be lacking.

—Very interesting meetings have been held in Columbus and in Delaware, Ohio, in the interest of the Woman's Home Missionary Society. Mrs. R. B. Hayes, president of the society, presided, and earnest and able addresses were made by Mrs. Dr. R. S. Rust, Dr. H. B. Ridgway and members of the faculty of the Ohio Wesleyan University. We expected that the society will hold a series of meetings at the East during the coming season.

—A very pleasant family event occurred Dec. 14, in the parsonage, Lewiston, of our esteemed Maine correspondent, Rev. J. Luce. His only daughter, Miss Maggie, an accomplished young lady, was married by her father, assisted by Rev. D. B. Randall, to Mr. Frank H. Hazleton of Bridgton. Handsome presents and hearty good wishes from hundreds of friends showed the estimation in which the young couple are held. Their home will be Bridgton, Me. We wish them many happy and useful years.

—We make but few references to our plans for the coming year for ZION'S HERALD. The paper has reached such a mature age—fifty-nine years—that its character and the purpose of its managers are well known. Everything that the skill and means commanded by its editor, agent and publishing association can do to make it, in every respect, worthy of the wide, intelligent, Christian and Methodist patronage it enjoys, will be done. This we know our readers will readily believe without our enforcing it by many words.

—Just after the battle of Mureeshorough was fought, Mr. T. Brigham Bishop, then an engineer on the staff, obtained with an ordinary field camera an excellent photograph of General Garfield in military dress. This picture he has preserved, and from it a fine size crayon likeness of the General has been worked by Samuel V. Stillings, of Boston. Unitedly Messrs. Bishop and Stillings have tendered the crayon to Mrs. Garfield, and on her behalf Colonel Rockwell has accepted it. It probably reached its destination at Christ-mas.

—The Christian Alliance for Bible Reading and Memorizing, recently organized by Rev. W. F. Crafts of Brooklyn, which is designed for readers in all parts of the country, differs from other Bible unions in presenting, as its plan of Bible reading, book-marks, which the Bible is arranged in the order of events; that is, each psalm, prophecy, etc., is introduced among the historical books at the point where it was said or sung; the whole being divided into portions requiring for reading only four minutes each day for two years to complete the course.

—David C. Cook, of Chicago, publishes in a neat and cheap form the startling revelations made by Mr. Eli Johnson, the well-known temperance lecturer, in his speeches of the poisonous materials used in the manufacture of the wines and spirituous liquors of commerce. Mr. Johnson's statements, which are evidently terrible to startle the moderation as well as moderate drinker, are amply vouched for. The little tract will be read with painful interest. It is entitled, "Drinks from Drugs." Ten cents a copy; five for forty cents.

—Last March, at an enthusiastic public meeting, an effort was originated to raise \$75,000

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which has a very familiar sound. It is as-
tonishing that so much effort should be put
forth, and so much money expended, by
whiskey dealers, to secure the repeal of the
law, if it is not and cannot be, executed.
Gov. St. John has issued a proclamation de-
claring that in certain cities and towns there
is a combination of persons to defiantly
break the provisions of the law prohibiting
the manufacture and sale of intoxicating
liquors, and offering a series of rewards, from
\$100 to \$300, for the arrest and conviction of
such law breakers, and for the conviction
and removal from office of any magistrates
refusing to do their duty under the require-
ments of the law. Such a vigorous exhibition
of Christian earnestness in the execution of
a statute against a popular appetite and vice
is unusual; three or four hundred persons, imme-
diately or indirectly connected with his busi-
ness, are now gathered into it, and an im-
measurable amount of good is accomplished.
The relation of employer and employee is
mutually confounding and delightful. There is
no fear of strikes. Business is made a
"means of grace" to both capitalist and la-
borer.

— D. Lothrop & Co. issue two substantial
volumes having their authorship in one family.
One is entitled, "Around the World
Tour of Christian Missions," and the other is
"Round the World." The former is by
Rev. William F. Bainbridge and the latter by
his wife, Mrs. Lucy S. The mutual dedi-
cations are, perhaps, a little too affectionate
for good taste, being offered to each other
and including the family circle; but the
books are interesting, and the first is really a
valuable addition to our missionary literature.

— Worcester, Dec. 24, 1881.

WORCESTER DR. PEIRCE: Through my tears
I can just say that the eldest little girl of ours
— one who took so much interest in our eyes
and your sermons when here a year or two ago —
died in the parlor. She was only 2 years
and 3 months old, and was so mature that she
seemed more like a companion than like a
child. She died the 23d inst. of the terrible
membranous croup. We are smitten
for the first time in our home, but the
Lord is almost crushing. Pray for us.

JAMES A. CASS: — What can it mean? We cut this item
from the Daily Advertiser of Dec. 23: —

COUNCILMAN-ELECT E. J. LESLIE OF WARD 7
held a social jubilee over his victory, in the
Methodist chapel at Tower Hill last evening.
Dancing continued till a late hour, and there
was a clam-bake supper."

If there is any foundation to the incident,
there should be another dedication in Lynn,
after a good scouring; which, it is to be
hoped, would be impressive enough to pre-
serve the sanctuary of prayer from any such
desecration.

[It spoils the story, but not the moral, to
learn that the "chapel" is an old building,
and holds some time since to the Roman Catholics,
and entirely beyond the control of the Meth-
odists. We let the item stand, that the ex-
planation may accompany it in its rounds
through the papers.]

The Watchman, the venerable Baptist or-
gan of New England, starts on a new era. A
new company has been formed for its pur-
chase, and a well-known former editor, Dr.
J. W. Olmstead, assumes once more the man-
agement of its columns. Dr. Olmstead is a
veteran in the editorial field. He has a facile
pen, a calm temper, a Christian spirit, and an in-
tuitive sense of what is needed in the columns
of a family, religious and denominational pa-
per. He commences his new work vigorously.
We wish him heartily the success of his enter-
prise and the broadest field of usefulness!

The question is often asked, Where can
photographs of the old cathedrals, castles and
ruins found throughout Europe be obtained
in sizes sufficiently large to give a good idea
of the subject? A friend just returned wishes
to preserve some choice bits of scenery, the
contemplation of which gave a pleasure never
to be forgotten. Still another desires photo-
graphs of chef-d'oeuvres of the old masters,
the originals of which he has seen. These and all
others can have their wants fully supplied by
the Foreign Photograph Company, at No. 1
Music Hall Place, Boston. They have a catalog
now in press, which will be sent on re-
ceipt of six cents in stamps.

The *Gospel in all Lands* has now closed
its second year and proved itself to be one of
the best missionary publications of the day.
It is evangelical and undenominational. It
has heretofore been published monthly, but
will, next year, be issued weekly or monthly
as desired. A weekly part will be pub-
lished, and the four parts will be bound
together for a monthly edition when preferred.
\$2.00 a year. Eugene R. Smith, Bible
House, New York. The issue for December
has a large variety of entertaining and
instructive papers. It publishes in full the ad-
dress of our General Missionary Committee.
The periodical deserves the hearty support of
the churches that sustain missionaries and
seek the world's submission to Christ.

A number of our exchanges celebrate
Christmas with ornamented covers to their
sheets, or a supplement on finer paper than
usual, with contents appropriate to the sea-
son. The latter course was that of the *Interior*,
Chicago, one of the ablest of our
religious exchanges. The *New Advocate*,
the Independent, the *Churchman*, the Pitts-
burgh *Advocate*, and the *Christian Union*
had illustrated covers. This plan is fol-
lowed also by the *Methodist*, which is
issued a very handsome number last week. Its
design was original and appropriate. Its edi-
torials are always bright and able. Its mis-
cellany for this issue is adapted to the occa-
sion it commemorates.

The lady Washington correspondent of
the *Independent*—than whom no writer from
the capital yields a sharper or more brilliant
pen—exhibits a womanly bitterness toward
Gen. Grant and all his family. Whenever his
name is reached by any accident, she flames
up at once into a lively passion. His name is
to her like a red flag to an irritated bull. The
bare newspaper announcement that the Gen.
and his family were to make a visit at the
White House, awakens, in her last letter, her
liveliest periods, and points them with the
keenest stings. Excellent lady, the theme is
becoming monotonous! Please don't!

The *North American* for January opens
with an extended discussion of the moral re-
sponsibility of the insane. Although the sub-
ject is abstractly considered, its immediate
application to the great trial now going on is
constantly kept in mind. The only profes-
sional expert whose opinion would be of any
service to the wretched Guiteau would be Dr. G. M.
Beard, while the other four doctors afford
adequate promises for holding him accountable
for his terrible deed. William Martin Dick-
son considers the civil service question, and
Dr. Mary Putnam Jacobi has a calm and
well-written paper upon women as physi-
cians. There is a paper upon the "Geneva
Award," and a leaf from Confederate histo-

country at that period? We fall in our
places, but the world moves on.

The *Presbyterian* gives another of the
delightful business incidents which show how
Christianity may thoroughly leaven commercial
enterprises, and what blessed results can
be secured. The paper gives an account of
the rise and progress of one of the largest hat
establishments in the country—that of John
B. Stetson, esq. As soon as his business began
to grow and many men were employed, in
order to keep them from drinking habits, he
established a fine library for them. In a nice
room in his manufactory. Then for the Sab-
bath he arranged a Sunday school, with all
necessary appliances, in the library, with one
of the younger partners of the firm in charge of
it. Three or four hundred persons, immediately
or indirectly connected with his business,
are now gathered into it, and an im-
measurable amount of good is accomplished.
The relation of employer and employee is
mutually confounding and delightful. There is
no fear of strikes. Business is made a
"means of grace" to both capitalist and la-
borer.

— Musical selections from the best masters
accompanied the pastor's Christmas sermon on Sunday
morning.

Lowell, Central Church. — Rev. Mr.
Mooney, of the School of Theology of Boston
University, preached in Huntington Hall for
the Y. M. C. A., Sunday, Dec. 18. The people
were delighted. Rev. J. H. Mansfield lectured
Wednesday evening, Dec. 21, to the

class.

Charleston, Trinity. — Musical selections
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The Family.

THE GOLDEN YEAR.

BY EBEN E. REXFORD.

In its wide circle round the far-off sun,
The earth swings on until a year is done.
Another follows. We may work or wait,
The years are sure as the decree of fate.
They come and go in their resistless march,
And man looks upward in the sky's wide arch.

And in that type of God's infinity
It feels his weakness, crying, "What are we?"

The years marked off upon the dial of time
He cannot hasten in their round sublime;
But we can move toward the golden year,
When love and peace shall make their dwellings here.

It will not come to us. Our feet must climb
A rough, hard road, until, in God's good

time,
We triumph over error, wrong and doubt;

That bar the way and hedge the road about,

Above the hill's high summit brightly gleams
A golden atmosphere, like that of dreams.

We say, "The day is dawning—is it hand,"

And at the last we vaguely understand
That when the hill is climbed, our eyes shall see

The golden age that waits for you and me.

It waits for us, and we may enter in
The promised land—if we have helped to win.

But bravely we must work to clear the way;

Of ignorance and wrong, which so delay

The world's march onward to the longed-for time.

Remember this, 'tis only as we climb
O'er obstacles, and rise o'er circumstance,

The world expands and grows upon our

glance.

The years of time are in God's hand-to-day,

But it is ours to hasten or delay

The grand, millennial year of jubilee,

When Love's the universal law will be.

With folded hands no longer idly wait,

And say that right must triumph soon or late,

And dream about the time we've waited long,

Foretold by seers and in the poet's song;

The golden age we sigh for will not come

While hands are idle and while lips are dumb;

We shall not triumph till we boldly smite

The rock of error with the rod of right.

Then truth's pure streams shall flow on every hand.

Refreshing all in this thistled-torned land;

Then shall the thousand years of peace come down

With Eden glory all the hills to crown;

And Love's shall be a consummated plan

Of man in perfect fellowship with man.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS.

BY CLARA M. BLUNT.

To be a stranger in a strange land, is like a sudden transition from faith to sight. The traveler's descriptions all are true, all as good as can be given, yet with what one has expected to hear and to see, there come also other experiences "not laid down in the guide-books." Though the eyes may not yet be strong, they are at least wide open, and if first impressions are not always correct, superficial views are what first meet the gaze.

Thinking the HERALD readers may like a New England, or Yankee, version of tropical scenes, I will speak of a few of the things which appear strangest to a new-comer. After days of sailing with no land in sight, it ceases to be a wonder that Columbus should kiss the ground after his long, anxious voyage, and even an island would be hailed with delight. What, then, are the feelings of him who approaches the land to which he is bound already by the ties of work he expects to do in the future, and the land where he intends to remain—God willing—till days shall lengthen into months, and months shall lengthen into years? No matter how skeptical one may have been in regard to the feelings excited by the first sight of land, he instantly learns what those feelings are, and wonders that he ever doubted their power. However grand, and deep, and mighty, and wide the ocean may be, the glories of the land are worthy to be quickly exchanged for the wonders of the sea. The land! There it lies, far away on the dim horizon, with a long line of "feathery, fronded palms" rising up out of the water and standing like the vanguard of interior forests.

The waters of the far famed Amazon are almost identical in color with those of the muddy Ohio, but there is here a shimmer of bronze which I never saw elsewhere on any river or sea. The moon shone brightly on the evening we sailed up from the ocean, but it only rendered faintly visible the fishing boats which swarmed around us on the dark water. The sails are smeared with tar, and only an occasional glimmer of light flashes out from the black boats and then is extinguished again in darkness. Afar gleamed the lights of the city of Para, growing brighter as we approached through the night, and shining still when at midnight we anchored at the fort, four miles below the city and sixty-eight miles from the mouth of the river.

I must not pause to tell of the novel beauty of the scene above which we saw the sun rise on July 6. Strange plants sprung from the ground to clasp leafy boughs with the shrubs, which turn reached up to the overhanging branches of the high trees whose giant limbs mingled their thick, clustering foliage with the strong, intertwining vines. Before us lay the grayish white walls and low-roofed, red-tiled buildings, among which rose towers in which bells swing, while slow-winged birds seemed keeping watch and ward above the town. Walking beneath the stately palms whose graceful branches have been waving friendly welcome ever since land appeared in sight, we find these self-same, sailing birds are a kind of vulture; but they are too small to honor the name. The people all speak Portuguese, whether they are Indians, negroes or Brazilians. The whole population is divided into three classes—the aristocrats, the middle, and the low classes.

No lady walks in the streets unless attended by an escort or a servant. There are plenty of women, however, who go about with bare, brown feet thrust in

small Turkish slippers, whose heels clatter along the dusty pavements in the most slip-shod style. "In the cool of the day," their nubile children huddled around them, the women sit in groups on the ground, smoking long-stemmed pipes and gossiping with their neighbors, their callers, or the passers-by.

Wherever one goes, at morning, noon or night, one sees groups of soldiers in their linen uniforms. They wear scarlet tassels on their dark caps and carry swords in scabbards dangling at their backs. They are of every conceivable color and shade, for the Brazilian army is largely composed of men fit for no other work.

The slaves and the servants all carry their burdens, from a saucer or a heavy water jar to a basket or a broad, wooden tray, on their heads, to an extent unknown even in the southern United States. One of the most curious sights to be seen in the early morning is the milkman going his rounds. He carries several tin measures in one hand, while with the other he leads a cow by a long rope tied to her horns. She has learned his route and goes walking quietly along followed by her muzzled calf, which is sometimes tied to her tail! The approach of this novel trio is heralded by the musical chimes of three brass bells which are fastened to the cow's leather collar, and which summon the customer to the window or door, there to wait while the cow is being milked. Certainly this arrangement insures the purchaser against buying an adulterated liquid, and is accordingly not without its advantages.

Instead of a bread wagon, the baker, or "baker's man," walks about the streets carrying fresh rolls in a print bag which is slung over his shoulder.

He rings no bells, and if the family is not aroused by the rattling of the crisp, brown crusts, he sometimes swings a bell and ranges his wares in a row along the window-sill while he exchanges morning greetings with the people who answer from hammocks where they have slept during the night.

As there are few wells in Para, many of the people depend on frequent visits from what might be called "a cold water man," if only the water were cold. A large case is mounted on wheels and drawn through the waterless districts by a single ox guided by means of a rope attached to the horns. The bare-footed driver rushes up to the door and knocks, or enters without the preliminary of knocking, and then journeys on.

None of the ladies ever go shopping here. The other morning I saw a group of women and children sitting on the ground in one of the courts trying on purple shoes while the vendor stood watching the inspection of his goods.

Nothing seems more common than parrots screaming from houses and shops, except the wretched dogs which appear from every quarter. These (?) are one of the pests of the city. They are a half-starved, quarrelsome race, and so numerous that I counted fifty-seven one morning on a single street while walking half an hour in the same direction. There were plenty more just like them visible on other streets, but I only counted those I met or which dozed in my path. None of them would be tolerated by any decent lover of the canine race in the United States, but here they drag out their miserable existence, dit-turbed only by flying missiles or angry voices when they grow more than usually noisy.

These people are especially diligent in fire-works, which crackle and blaze at any hour of the day or night. Taken in the aggregate, the expense must be enormous, for every week enough are burned to furnish quite a celebration to an ordinary New England village. They form an important part of each festive occasion.

In the Catholic cathedrals no seats are provided. The feminine part of the flock kneel through the entire service. Few of the gentlemen are as devout, and they seldom kneel except when the priest at the altar rings his little bell, entertaining themselves with conversation the rest of the time, or with looking about over the congregation. The people seem to have various ways of enjoying the services, from the solemn priests to the smiling altar boys who playfully extinguish each other's wax lights or extinguish their own while busily trooping about the aisles. The responses and the chanting are about as expressive and as reverent as the tones I hear from the schools I pass where all the children are studying aloud at the same time. The music, however, is usually very good; the heavy, deep-toned organ being accompanied on special occasions by an orchestra, while at intervals during mass rockets are sent up from the door of the cathedral. At the close the mysterious Sisters of Charity creep about the altar and shrines extinguishing the lights and winking the tinted glitter to a darkness like their own dresses. To me there is something peculiarly expressive in this simple act, for it seems as if they say, "Behold the darkness to which all this brilliancy leads." The priests invariably wear black robes and round, broad-brim hats on the streets.

I was not a little amused, the other morning, when the communion service came to an end, to see a lady (not a nun) remove a white covering from a sacristy bag which was ornamented with gilt letters and blue tassels, and pass around with it to receive contributions of money; and when any failed to respond, she paused to expostulate in low tones to the delinquent, seeming by a severe face and half-whispered Portuguese to give reproof. What would be the effect of a similar system in United States churches?

The Catholics have two services each Sabbath—one at sunrise, the other at sunset. There is now no Protestant service, and Sunday in Para is just like any other day. All the shops are open, and even the schools in one of the cathedrals under the direction of the Catholic Bishop of Para has its sessions seven days of every week.

Most of the buildings of this city are but one story high. They are frequently ornamented with urns or statues, which are placed on the roof. The best houses are built of brick and covered with porcelain tiling, but mud walls and thatched roofs are by no means uncommon.

In another letter I may give some account of our work here, as my pen has carried me outside the limits of the HERALD column by this time.

Para, Brazil, 1881.

CHRISTMAS SONG.

O'er the hills night shadows steal;
Spare the vine, the breeze stirs;
See the Virgin, new-born Child!
Round the manger shepherds kneel—
Humble worshippers.
Hark! angels sing,
Round their heavenly King!
For earth's sinful and defiled
Comes to-night the Saviour Child.

He who to the cradle brings
One pure, generous thought,
To the Infant there
Brings a gift more rare.
Hark! angels sing
Round the kingly Christ.
Hark! angels sing
Round their heavenly King!
'Tis for man, and not for them,
Sleeps the Babe in Bethlehem.

CONSTANTINE E. BROOKS, in Harper's Magazine for January.

WHAT KRIS KRINGLE BROUGHT TO THE FORDS.

A CHRISTMAS STORY IN TWO CHAPTERS.

BY MARY LOWE DICKINSON.

CHAPTER I.

"It's useless to talk about it, Mary! When the rent and the grocer are paid, there won't be a dollar over, and there's the doctor's bill and the coal! We are running behind all the time," said Mr. Ford took his pipe impatiently from the shelf behind the kitchen stove. He was not in the most amiable of moods, as his wife well knew, so she gave him no word of reply, but went on clearing the table where he had just eaten his evening meal. Her very silence seemed to irritate him, and by the time the dish water was in the pan, he was standing by the sink with his hands in his pockets and his face contracted in a sulky frown.

"The fact is, Mary, that, instead of getting Christmas presents for the children, we had better pay our debts. Instead of bothering your head to see what more you can get, you'd better be thinking what we can do without. I don't want to hear any more about Christmas."

The little woman in her faded calico dress gave a quick glance up at the pipe in her husband's mouth before she answered gently, "I hardly know of anything more that we could do without. Henry."

"I know about it, mother. I was awake and heard it all; but we shall not care, Walter and Fred and I. We don't care for Christmas at all; we're not used to Christmas-tree anyway, and I don't believe we'd like it. But what did papa mean by saying nobody ever made Christmas for him?"

"It all sounded much harsher than I meant, Winnie. He feels very much troubled that the money he can earn is not enough for all our wants; he hoped his wages would be increasing this autumn, but they have not been, and sometimes he gets almost discouraged, but he loves us, my daughter, and he does not mean to be anything but kind."

"Yes, I know it's hard, Henry, and I didn't ask you to spend anything more; I only thought if we could manage to get the things that they may have, at the Christmas time, and hang them on a little tree, that I would try to get a nice dinner, and it would seem like real Christmas to the children. I can't bear to hear them tell what other children have, and to have nothing at all to mark the day."

"Well, they will have to learn to take it as it comes. Nobody ever made Christmas for me," was the surly response, as he put on his coat to go out.

His wife said no more, but as the door closed behind him, she lifted the corner of the shade and peered out. Yes, he was going toward the saloon at the corner, only a block and a half away, and perhaps if she had not made him angry, she would have stayed at home and there would have been at least a few dimes more to pay the doctor or to diminish the bill for coal.

Her face was very sad as she took her sewing and drew her chair near the stove, first carefully closing all the drafts so that it might consume the least possible fuel. "It will not matter for me," was the thought that passed through her mind; "I can sit very near, and it won't hurt my old shoes if I put them on the edge of the hearth; and then I will make it burn up brightly for Henry when he comes in."

She cast an anxious look toward the door of the adjoining room where she thought her twelve-years-old daughter was lying asleep, but where, in fact, she was awake and sobbing with her hands pressed tightly over her face lest her mother should hear a sound.

"But he forgot me, mamma," she said sadly.

"No, dear child, he remembered, only he feels bitter and sore because he cannot do for you all that he would like to do. Your father is a good man, Winnie."

"Oh, yes, I know," answered the child hesitatingly; and then with a sudden smile and a little eager squeeze of her mother's arm, she continued.

"O mother dear, won't it be nice if we could make a Christmas for him—a real, regular Christmas, with presents, and a tree, and plums in the pudding?"

"Oh, wouldn't it be nice? He could never say again that nobody cared."

"Yes, indeed, it would be nice; but how could we, child? You know we have no money."

"But I believe we could, mamma dear; we could do something, anyway. The grocer would let us have the plums."

"Yes, I could be sure of the pudding, if that were all."

"And could you—do you think we could have a fire in the parlor?"

"They must learn to take it as it is."

comes; nobody ever kept Christmas for me!" She had heard the door bang and her mother's sigh, and, sitting up in bed, and peeping from the window, had watched her father's form retreating in the shadows, and she, too, knew as well as her mother at what corner he would be sure to stop. No wonder that the little rosy cheeks were flushed and troubled, and that she buried her face in the pillow lest her mother should know that she was awake and in tears. So while the mother sat by the fire and mended the worn coat for Walter, Winnie—little woman that she was—was entering upon her woman's heritage of anxiety and pain. It was not only that the beautiful Christmas tree, whose gleaming lights had shone on her imagination a few minutes ago, had suddenly shriveled and gone, not only that the lights were out, the gifts that she had fancied herself handing down to Walter and little Fred no longer to be found, but instead of these there arose a picture of her mother sitting silent and sad by the kitchen fire; of her father's figure moving away through the darkness toward that red circle of lurid light in the window of the saloon. An hour ago she did not want to sleep because her waking fancies were so bright, and now she could not sleep for dread of an uneasy step and a harsh voice that had sometimes broken her slumbers at night. And so the dear little heart waited, forgetting her own disappointment in the womanly sharing, in silence, of her mother's unuttered pain.

How she wished mamma would come to her and let her put her arms about her neck and comfort her, and not act as if she were not willing she should know her grief. But her mother did not come, and Winnie knew she was waiting there in the chill, and wretched because she could not make a happy Christmas for her father.

At last her heart grew too heavy with its load of loving sympathy, and she stole softly out of bed, and the next moment was kneeling in her night-gown close by her mother's side.

"Why, my child! Why, Winnie! Why are you out of bed at this time of night? Hurry back! This room is too cold for you."

"Not unless it is too cold for you, mother. Don't send me away; let me stay with you," urged the child, creeping closer, and hiding her bare feet under her mother's dress. "Let me watch with you for father. I have been watching from my window by the bed, and I thought I heard him coming. I have heard him before, mother dear. I know all about it, and I want to watch with you."

"No, no, my child! This is the time for you to sleep, or you will not be fit for study to-morrow. Papa will not want you to wait for him. He will be home soon. Poor papa, I feel so sorry for him! I think he went away very unhappy because he felt too poor to make a happy Christmas for us."

"I know about it, mother. I was awake and heard it all; but we shall not care, Walter and Fred and I. We don't care for Christmas at all; we're not used to Christmas-tree anyway, and I don't believe we'd like it. But what did papa mean by saying nobody ever made Christmas for him?"

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MISSIONARY CONCERT PROGRAMME.

JANUARY, 1882.

SUBJECT.—Christian Missions, the Outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and the Conversion of the World.

(The subject previously designated for the January concert ("Italy") is deferred to February; but our churches may conform to the example of their neighbors, and offer the theme that is proposed which is now announced for Saturday, Jan. 28, of the week of prayer. It would be preferable, in some cases, to devote Sabbath evening, Jan. 8, to the purpose.)

1. Christian Missions.—The term implies a broad view of the field. It invites to a sympathetic consideration for the efforts of all churches to proclaim the Gospel to the ends of the earth. The many signs of progress and the results already reached in this new world of organized Protestant missions, will be recalled with gratitude.

Let us turn our attention for a time to the various societies that are prosecuting the work in foreign missions, and remember how recent is the origin of nearly all. In 1790 only three such societies existed in Europe and none in America. Then, after a special spiritual awakening, came the English Baptist Society in 1792. Others followed in that decade. From 1800 to 1830 sixteen were formed, and from 1830 to 1850 thirty-three more. Dr. Christlieb and Dr. Dorchester both give the present number of societies for foreign work as about 70; other substantial organizations to be added. Dr. Wilder, editor of the Princeton *Missionary Review*, makes the number 84. A summary of statistics of these societies for 1879-80, as gathered by the editor, may be found in the September-October and November-December numbers of that *Review*. An extended list of societies with statistics of earlier date is given in Dr. Reid's "History of our Missions," Vol. II, page 30. The statistics for 1880 of all the principal American and British Societies (except the English Baptist and English Presbyterian) may be found in the April number of the *Church Manual*. For some of them later statistics are now accessible.

It is very difficult to arrive at uniform results in making up comparative tables of missionary statistics because of the different methods followed in constructing the reports. It is important, however, to follow step by step the development of this aggressive movement of the church upon heathenism. A close acquaintance with the facts brings us into nearer relations with our brethren, and is a source of much encouragement and guidance for the future. We would not lose sight in this connection of the very helpful service rendered by the Woman's Missionary societies. Of the sixteen in the United States all but one originated since 1868. The whole number of Woman's Societies is about 35.

2. The Outpouring of the Holy Spirit.—It was the powerful revival influence of Wesley's time, and that which accompanied Whitefield's preaching in Scotland, that moved the Scotch ministers to the original call for a concert of prayer, and their appeal is said to have been in this form: That united prayer should be offered "for the effusion of the Spirit of God upon all the churches and upon the whole habitable earth." Enlightened and exalted to a more zealous Christian life by the divine Spirit, these ministers recognized at once the source of power. The truth so frequently expressed in the Bible about the essential office of the Holy Spirit for the world's conversion now became real to them, and powerfully so as a recognition of the deal.

They realized profoundly with Paul that "our sufficiency is of God," and that the sufficiency is indeed divine. They could ask nothing less than the largest things in a God-inspired manner. They asked in behalf of the Master and His work, responding as in old days, out of sympathy with Christ, to the call which the Heavenly Father makes upon the Son. "Ask of Me and I will give that the heathen for thine inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." We know well the teaching of Scripture as how Christ is to come into possession of the doctrine has been stated at different periods in the history of the church. The subject was exhaustively treated. The second paper, or the "Fatherhood of God," was to have been presented by Bro. A. N. Bodfish, but sickness in his family prevented his attendance, and the subject had to be omitted. Bro. Beale was to have presented the third paper on the "Duty and Eternal Sonship of Christ," but was not able to be present on account of funeral services in his own charge. The fourth paper, on the "Personality of the Holy Ghost," was also omitted on account of the necessary absence of Bro. Fox.

Bro. G. H. Butler read an excellent paper on the "Necessity of Doctrinal Preaching," and was followed by Bro. Warren Applebee on the subject, "What are the Distinctive Doctrinal Differences between evangelical and non-evangelical churches?" Each of the papers gave evidence of careful study and a mastery of the subject on the part of the writer. The last-named paper elicited very favorable comment from the brethren present. Touching as it did a point of practical importance to many of the brethren, it was listened to with close attention, and brought about a lively discussion, in which Bros. Willett, Applebee, Ransom, Sprows, Williams and Fisk took part. The question whether we may or may not fellowship with churches of the Liberal order was answered by the apostolic advice, "Come ye out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing and I will receive you."

Tuesday evening the association was favored with an excellent sermon by Bro. S. Sprouts, of Sandwich, from 1 Cor. 15: 55-57, assisted in the introductory service by Bro. Butler.

At the close of the evening sermon the church and the language of Scripture show that the Holy Spirit is manifest at times in large measure. "I will pour out My Spirit," (Recall 32: 15; 44: 35; Ezek. 39: 29; Joel 2: 28.) Undoubtedly the bestowal of the Spirit must correspond in some degree to our capacity and our desire, but it will always be more generous than we. When once the Christian heart, with all the intelligence and wealth and power that it boasts to-day, finds its heart burdened with desire for the gathering of the heathen nations, certainly the Holy Ghost will not be lacking on His part. For such prayer as engages the whole church and brings the consecration of all its talent and wealth and affection, we might well suppose God will reserve the most glorious manifestation of His power. Pray, then, pray in all consecration, for the "outpouring of the Holy Spirit."

3. The Conversion of the World.—This wide-spread thought is the seed of all good. The grandest conception that has ever entered the human mind, it is God's own thought, voiced by the prophets and by Jesus Christ, the King, when He came, till it is given to the Christian Church as a sword and indicator of its mission. But the conversion of the world is something more than the evangelization of the world. The former is reached in part by the latter. We pray for the former; it is God's work, we can accomplish the latter; it is our work. The continuance of our prayer will be attested by the measure of our work in evangelization.

4. The Ministry of the Word.—This wide-spread thought is the seed of all good. The grandest conception that has ever entered the human mind, it is God's own thought, voiced by the prophets and by Jesus Christ, the King, when He came, till it is given to the Christian Church as a sword and indicator of its mission. But the conversion of the world is something more than the evangelization of the world. The former is reached in part by the latter. We pray for the former; it is God's work, we can accomplish the latter; it is our work.

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